

Draft

Expectations of Editorial Director at The Red and Black 8/15/12

Effective today, we expect our Editorial Director and the entire professional staff to be responsible for the following:

1) Implementing a process for continuous improvement in our content, including soliciting and responding to audience feedback

2) Ensuring that we adhere to the basic quality standards. You are accountable for the final product. See attached standards.

3) Maintaining and updating our quality standards on a continuing basis.

4) Teaching these standards to our students and demanding that they follow them.

5) Providing direction to students on what to cover to ensure we are covering topics that are compelling. Develop story ideas and ensure that the assignment is clear.

6) Teaching, through instruction and example, how to do their jobs. Show them how to:

- Interact with our audience, get feedback and respond with solutions
- Conduct interviews
- write
- edit
- design
- produce video
- shoot photos
- manage our website
- use social media
- manage staff
- make assignments
- recruit
- make good decisions on content

7) Holding our students accountable for quality, by correcting poor quality before publication and grading quality post-publication.

8) Taking corrective action to replace students that do not follow our standards or repeatedly do poor quality work.

9) Expanding our student workforce, increasing our 'bench strength' to improve quantity of content and increase our ability to demand excellence.

10) Maintaining an accurate org chart to include name, hometown, major, job responsibility and reporting relationships. Add photos for each

What works - What we MUST strive to include in each product 24 x 7

More of:

- Clear photos that enable the reader to see the subject.
- Pictures of our audience, with the name if possible. Set objectives, ie. Have 10+ in each paper.
- Stories/Hooks. Maximize the number of stories above the fold and on front. AJC had 11, plus weather above the fold yesterday.
- Content that is FROM our audience, which automatically makes it of interest to our audience, ie comments, letters, comments, poll results, interviews, chatter from social media, reviews
- Referrals to inside and/or site.
- Content that invites our readers to respond, send photos, comment, criticize - Beg them to engage with us.
- Content, in prominent positions, that has proven to be compelling based on analytics and audience feedback, ie. what we just saw with Freshman and Rush coverage.
- Photos, Videos online and in paper
- Compelling content in e-edition newsletters. We must edit these to show the best selection.

A balance of good and bad:

GOOD

- Content that is ABOUT our audience doing something unique, helpful, outstanding, new, dramatic, ie scholarships for freshman.
- Content that our readers have asked for, ie. how to save money, how to join a club, where to find a job, what's going on (events), what's new. We have a list to start. Build the list by talking to our audience.

BAD

- Content that catches people or organizations doing bad things. I guess this is "journalism". I think we are aligned on Crime and "who started off the year with a police record". And that the freshman class lacks some minority demographics".

If in question, have more GOOD than BAD.

We will not tolerate:

- Sarcastic comments directed at our audience in non-opinion sections, ie "It's been a solid, Lilly Pulitzered week..." We wouldn't say it's be a solid yarmulke topped week at the Jewish Community Center. Or a solid burr-headed week at the African American studies conference. Or a solid body pierced day at The Red and Black. Stop this now.
- Obscenity. Unless the quote is from a public figure and the story cannot be told with a "blank" instead of the actual obscenity, eliminate obscenities. If we can't edit police reports that have obscenities, then don't run the report.
- Headlines that aren't in English, obscure the topic of the story, or are in clear violation of journalistic and company standards. What are our standards?
- Liable

We will strive to eliminate:

- Stories, especially on the front page, that are on topics that are clearly of limited interest to our audience.
- Inconsistency in design style
- Content that is not understandable to the majority of our audience, would be judged offensive to members of our community, is inane, or is needlessly antagonistic. ie. cartoons that make no sense.
- Wasting real estate, in print, with overly large photos (unless the photo justifies the space), our flag. etc.
- Overly long stories that are not worthy of the space. unless there's a clear consensus between Directors and student staff that the subject is compelling and requires the space.
- Misquotes, errors in fact, typos and other basic journalistic errors
- One sided coverage without a documented attempt to tell the other side.